

IOWA BIRD LIFE

Winter 1994 Volume 64 Number 1



IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

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Winter 1994

Volume 64, Number 1

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The IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. *Iowa Bird Life* and *I.O.U. News* are quarterly publications of the Union.

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INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other materials relating to birds and bird finding in Iowa should be sent to the editor. Accepted manuscripts will generally be published promptly, depending on space available, with the following absolute deadlines: 15 November for the Winter issue; 15 February for the Spring issue; 15 May for the Summer issue; and 15 July for the Fall issue. Most manuscripts will be refereed. All material should be typed double-spaced or hand printed in ink on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper. Authors should pattern their style after a current issue of the journal. If you want more detailed guidelines or advice regarding the appropriateness of your topic for *Iowa Bird Life*, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the editor. Manuscripts may also be submitted on computer disk (Word 4.0 for Macintosh or compatible programs). Please submit one printed copy of the manuscript with the disk.

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20-22 May 1994, Ames

FIELD REPORTS

Anyone observing birds in Iowa is encouraged to report their findings on a quarterly basis to the Field Reports editors. Sample reporting and documentation forms suitable for duplication are available from the editor (send self-addressed stamped envelope to Jim Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014). An article describing the reporting process is also available.

Deadlines for receipt of field reports are as follows:

- *Winter (Dec, Jan, Feb)--3 March (W. Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653)
- *Spring (Mar, Apr, May)--3 June (Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246)
- *Summer (Jun, Jul)--3 August (James J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014)
- *Fall (Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov)--3 December (Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246)

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*Deadline for receipt of reports: 15 January. For forms and instructions write: W. Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653.

IOWA BIRDLINE 319-338-9881

The birdline is a recorded summary of interesting recent bird sightings in Iowa. At the end of the report you can leave a message and report recent sightings. Be sure to give your name and phone number as well as the location of the bird and date seen. Call in as soon as possible after sighting a rare bird. Jim Fuller checks the reports daily and updates the recording on Monday, so make sure Sunday sightings are reported by Sunday night.

I.O.U. NEWS

Send items of interest for the newsletter to the editors (J. Hank and Linda Zaletel, 1928 6th St., Nevada, IA 50201).

MATERIALS AVAILABLE

The following materials may be obtained by writing the editorial office (Iowa Bird Life, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014):

- *Order form for back issues of *Iowa Bird Life*: send self-addressed stamped envelope.
- *Field Checklist of Iowa Birds--1992 Edition: 6 for \$1.00, postpaid. Also available at annual meetings.

REPORTING NEBRASKA BIRDS

Sightings of Nebraska birds, including those within the Nebraska portion of DeSoto N.W.R., should be reported to Loren and Babs Padelford, 1405 Little John Road, Bellevue, NE 68005. Formats for reporting and documentation are the same as for Iowa. The Nebraska Bird Line, available 24 hours a day, is 402-292-5325. Iowa birders are encouraged to report their Nebraska sightings to this number.

ADDRESS CHANGES

Please send address changes/corrections to Pam Allen, 1601 Pleasant St., West Des Moines, IA 50265.

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THE EFFECTS OF THE 1991 HALLOWEEN STORM ON MIGRATORY WATERFOWL

BRIAN A. TILL

Early season winter storms can greatly affect the migration pattern and mortality of waterfowl and other birds. During the Armistice Day storm of 11 November 1940, the temperature in Des Moines dropped from 54 degrees at 5:55 a.m. to 18 degrees at 11:08 a.m. This drastic change in weather killed 50 to 90% of the pheasant population in northwestern Iowa (Scott and Baskett 1941), and caused the most spectacular migration of waterfowl on record (Green 1963).

A less spectacular migration of waterfowl occurred on 2 November 1955 (Bellrose 1957). An ice storm on St. Patrick's Day of 17 March 1965 caused the deaths of half of the pheasant population in Iowa (Farris et al. 1977). This study will describe how the storm of the weekend of 1 November 1991 affected the migration of waterfowl as well as other birds.

METHODS

I obtained information for this study by contacting regional wildlife biologists and research biologists of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources by mail. The Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative of Urbandale and the National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, North Carolina were contacted to obtain information on the severity of the storm.

RESULTS

THE STORM

A major snowstorm developed over northeastern Texas around noon on 31 October 1991, and moved north to northeast through the Mississippi Valley to the western shores of Lake Superior by the morning of 2 November. The storm intensified and became a blizzard as arctic air rushed into Iowa after the passage of an arctic cold front on 31 October. The storm gradually weakened as it moved into Ontario during the early morning hours of 3 November (National Climatic Data Center 1991).

Ahead of the storm, a moist southerly flow of air developed and encompassed the entire Mississippi Valley region. A mixture of freezing rain, sleet, and snow moved into extreme southern Minnesota and northeastern Iowa. Iowa received its heaviest snowfall during the afternoon and evening of 31 October. Eight to 15 inches of snow fell in the northwestern Iowa. Estherville received the most with 15 inches. As the storm moved northeast, a backlash of snow hit northeastern Iowa, with four to six inches common over extreme northeastern Iowa.

Near-blizzard conditions occurred during the later stages of the storm, as snow was whipped by 30 to 60 mile-per-hour winds which drifted snow up to 10 feet deep through the morning hours of 3 November. The Governor of Iowa declared 52 of Iowa's 99 counties disaster areas. This ice storm was considered the most costly in Iowa history.

WATERFOWL MIGRATION

The Halloween storm had pronounced effects on migrating waterfowl. In Iowa, the number of dabbling ducks peaked at the height of the storm and dropped off greatly after that (Figure 1). The diving ducks were even more affected by the storm. Before the storm, there were few diving ducks in Iowa, but as the storm moved through, so did the diving ducks, and very few remained after the storm was over (Figure 1).

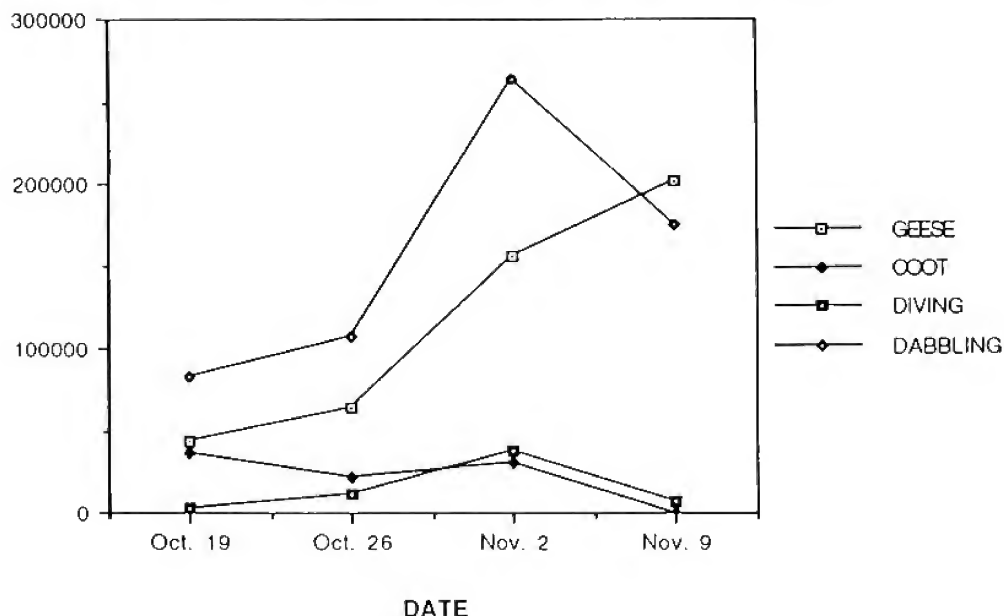


Figure 1. Number of geese, coots, diving ducks, and dabbling ducks found in Iowa, fall 1991. Data from LaGrange et al., 1991.

The American Coot showed a similar response to the storm. Even though the numbers do not show it, the coots on the Mississippi River weathered the storm and migrated after the winds subsided (LaGrange et al. 1991) and after the storm was gone, few remained in Iowa.

Geese exhibited a different response to the storm. Their overall numbers in Iowa increased during the storm. This was especially true of Snow Geese in southwestern Iowa. Their numbers increased from about 30,000 before the storm to 200,000 during the storm (Washburn 1991a). These geese eventually were pushed southward by the storm, but in December when the weather moderated, more than 100,000 geese returned to southwestern Iowa (Anon. 1991).

OTHER BIRDS

The storm also had detrimental effects on upland game birds and other birds. Perhaps the hardest hit were the Northern Bobwhite in southern Iowa. The quail hatch in southern Iowa was very late in 1991, and these birds apparently did not weather the storm very well (B. Ohde, pers. comm. to author, 7 Jan 1992, C. Priebe, pers. comm. to author, 10 Jan 1992).

The Ring-necked Pheasant population also suffered some losses due to the storm (Kollings 1991) although perhaps not as significant as those of the quail. A number of pheasants that were being monitored in a study in north-central Iowa suffered fairly low mortality. Because the storm developed slowly from drizzle to rain to snow and ice, these birds may have been able to get to cover (Washburn 1991b).

Other bird species were also affected by the storm. Biologists in northwestern Iowa noted that sparrows, blackbirds, Morning Doves, and other species apparently suffered losses in that section of Iowa (D. Harr, pers. comm. to author, 7 Jan 1992, T. Neal, pers. comm. to author, 8 Jan 1992). Christmas bird counts in Iowa in 1991 were generally lower than in previous years, perhaps because of losses due to this storm (Silcock 1992).

DISCUSSION

The massive waterfowl migration caused by the Halloween storm in 1991 was probably not as spectacular as the migration associated with the Armistice Day storm of 1940. However, waterfowl populations are lower today than those of 1940. Also, more people saw the 1940 migration because it was a national holiday, and the day started out with beautiful weather. In contrast, few people observed the 1991 migration because the weather started out bad and got progressively worse.

The Halloween storm of 1991 also caused losses in the populations of Northern Bobwhite and several other species. It is not clear how severe these losses were, but these species will probably recover within a few years.

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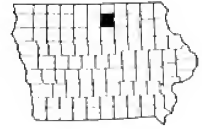
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BIRDING PARKER'S AND MACNIDER'S WOODS IN MASON CITY

RITA GORANSON

Many birders seem to think that they have to go to some wild exotic place to find birds. In doing so, they may miss out on the delights of birding in areas that are close by. Over the past several years, I have found much pleasure and a great variety of birds in two small wooded parks in Mason City.



These two tracts, Parker's Woods and MacNider's Woods, in combination cover about 15 acres in the northwestern part of Mason City. These small parks are situated along the banks of Willow Creek and during the spring and fall migrations host a variety of birds. In two years, I have seen 104 species of birds in these two woods.

To reach these parks, from interstate 35 follow highway 18 east into Mason City. Turn left off of highway 18 onto Pierce Avenue and follow Pierce Avenue north to First Street NW. Turn right onto First Street and continue to Jackson Avenue. Turn left to the park. Parking areas and a shelter with restrooms are on Jackson Avenue.

Parker's Woods starts at the corner of First Street NW and Jackson Avenue and proceeds north three blocks and west two blocks. This area contains a stand of oak trees plus mixed deciduous trees and shrubs. MacNider's Woods starts at Fourth Street NW and Harrison Avenue and extends five blocks west to Pierce Avenue and two blocks north to Sixth Street NW. MacNider's Woods is northwest of Parker's Woods and is a continuation of the greenbelt along Willow Creek. There is no parking for MacNider's Woods but the main path through Parker's Woods continues on into the second park. MacNider's Woods is a mixed deciduous woods with shrubs and with weeds and grasses allowed to grow in several areas. Inside these stands of trees are several low spots that often hold water after heavy rains in spring and early summer.

The parks are very well maintained and consequently the main path, which starts by the bridge on First Street and connects the two areas, is accessible throughout the year until snow falls in the winter. There are several side trails that are open unless they are flooded by excessive rain. Because of the good trail maintenance, it is easy to take a lunch break from work and go looking for birds and return to work without needing to change into field clothing.

Spring is the best time for birding. Nineteen species of warblers including Northern Parula, Golden-winged, Black-throated Green, Black-throated Blue, and Mourning warblers have been seen flitting through the trees or drinking water from the ponds. Both Northern and Louisiana waterthrush have been seen here. Ovenbirds are numerous in the spring and fall. While searching for warblers, one could see Scarlet Tanagers, both Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned kinglets, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, as well as Veery, Hermit, Swainson's, and Gray-cheeked thrushes. American Woodcocks probe the dirt in May.

The common summer species include Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Northern Oriole, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, and Indigo Bunting. In summer, broods of Mallard and Wood Duck are found along the river, and in early July, Spotted Sandpipers are found on the river's sandbars. Great Blue Heron, Green-backed Heron, and Belted Kingfisher are found along the river. Several species of flycatchers including Willow Flycatcher, are also found in summer. Four species of vireos (Warbling, Red-eyed, Yellow-throated, and Solitary) are seen through May, with the Warbling Vireo

remaining all summer. A Broad-winged Hawk attempted to nest in a willow tree one year.

During fall, migrants again use this area. In September, at least 15 species of warblers are found, especially along the edge of the river. White-throated, Fox, and Song sparrows can be found in the long grasses and weeds, especially at the west end of the park. Later in the fall, Dark-eyed Juncos also appear there. Although more hawks are found during the spring, occasionally a Sharp-shinned or Cooper's hawk will surprise you by its appearance in fall.

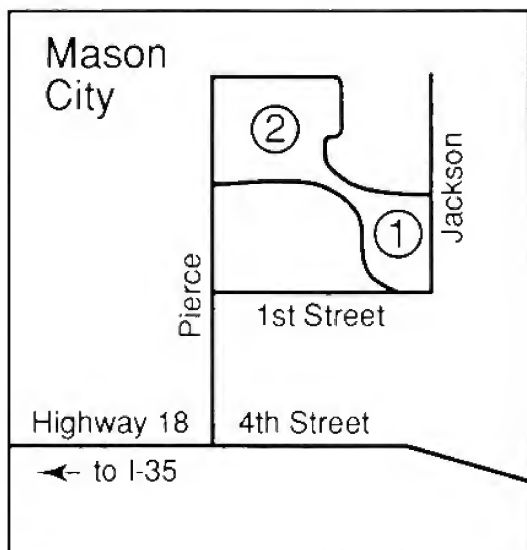


Figure 1. Parker's (No. 1) and MacNider's Woods (No. 2) in Mason City.

Winter is the slowest season for birds. Red-tailed Hawks occasionally visit the park and a Great Horned Owl hunts there throughout the winter. Mallards and Canada Geese stay all winter if there is open water on the river. There they occasionally are joined by a few American Black Ducks. Bald Eagles check the open water periodically. Several permanent residents (Northern Cardinal, Downy Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Blue Jay) along with House Finches from nearby bird feeders use the park where they rest in trees in the sunlight.

Although these two woods are small, they can hold many surprises. On a slow day, the main path can be walked in 20 minutes but on a good day, one can easily spend more than an hour enjoying the birdlife. The area is definitely one of the best places to see birds in the Mason City area.

115 Lakeview Drive, Mason City, IA 50401

WESTERN FLYCATCHER AT LAKE AHQUABI

ANN JOHNSON

On Saturday, 14 November 1992, Beth Brown and I were leading a field trip for the Iowa Audubon Council at Lake Ahquabi State Park in Warren County. A low pressure system had moved through the area two days earlier, bringing with it chilly temperatures. The overnight low had been 24° F and 0.4



inches of snow had fallen between 4:00 and 9:00 a.m. The wind was from the northwest at 13 miles per hour. By 9:00 a.m. the snow had stopped falling and cloud cover had decreased to 20 percent. Our morning bird list was rather short, with the usual resident woodland species, when I noticed a small bird dart from a low branch down to the grasses and return. The bird in front of us was none other than an *Empidonax* flycatcher which we would later identify as a Western Flycatcher.

The bird was olive-green on the back and as it turned we saw yellow underparts including the throat, breast, and belly. Our initial reaction was that we had a very late Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. Further observation, however, began raising a few doubts. The brownish-olive head was large with a pronounced peaked appearance. The bill was wide with a black upper mandible and a dull orange lower mandible. The yellow eye ring was almond-shaped, thicker at the front and pointed at the rear, at times appearing broken at the top. The back and tail were olive-green, and the wings were gray-brown with buffy wing bars. The yellow underparts were nearly uniform although the yellow was a bit brighter on the throat and through the center of the breast and belly. The primaries were relatively short, extending to the base of the tail from above or about even with the undertail coverts below. This short primary projection accentuated the length of the tail. The bird habitually flicked its tail and was actively pursuing insects in the sunny patches of grass along the wooded edge.

I was fairly certain that we had a vagrant *Empidonax*, most likely a member of the Western complex. This complex was created in 1989 by the split of Western Flycatcher into Cordilleran Flycatcher of the interior and Pacific-slope Flycatcher of the West Coast. We listened to tapes of *Empidonax* flycatchers to see if a call we had heard earlier matched anything on the tapes, but our results were inconclusive. After alerting the Birdline and a few other birders, we returned to the park and again observed and photographed the bird in the same general location. Several birders from central Iowa made an unsuccessful attempt to relocate the bird that afternoon.

The next morning a number of birders from across the state were searching for the bird with no success. The overnight low had been a chilly 26° F, and the wind had shifted to the southeast, bringing with it heavily overcast skies and a trace of new snow. I recalled that the previous day's activity seemed to be directly tied to grasses bathed in sunshine, a commodity in short supply this Sunday morning. About 9:30 a.m. Jim Fuller and I heard a dry call note reminiscent of a flycatcher but could not find the bird. Finally around 11:30 a.m. the sun appeared and so did the bird. Once again it darted to the grasses, seemingly catching insects that were stirring in the warming sunlight. A number of individuals were able to see and photograph the flycatcher from distances as close as 15 feet. The general consensus was that it was indeed a Western Flycatcher species. Cal Knight played a tape, and the bird became very agitated but did not call.

On Monday the wind was blowing from the south and temperatures reached a high of 61° F. Seventy-five percent of the daylight hours were sunny. The snow melted

and David Younblut, who kept vigilant watch on the area was unable to relocate the flycatcher. The loss of snow cover had perhaps increased the area of available food supply or the drop in barometric pressure may have triggered the bird's movement.

Knowledge of *Empidonax* flycatchers, and concurrent new field identification techniques, have increased a great deal in the last decade. My first attempt at visual identification of *Empidonax* flycatchers involved application of characteristics outlined by Jim Lane (Lane and Holt 1987) to birds of the Rocky Mountains. More comprehensive and detailed information is available in the excellent references used in analyzing this record (Zimmer 1985, Whitney and Kaufman 1985a, 1985b, 1986a, 1986b, 1987, Kaufman 1990).

Although many fall flycatchers have a yellow wash on the underparts, only three flycatcher species combine an olive back with a yellow throat and short primary extension: Yellow-bellied, Cordilleran, and Pacific-slope. The latter two are identifiable only by voice and comprise what is known as the Western complex. The characteristics, documented by numerous photographs, that most strongly favor Western Flycatcher were the brown rather than black wings, extreme almond-shaped eye ring, the peaked appearance to the head, and the upward flicking of the tail.

Peter Pyle has banded numerous *Empidonax* flycatchers throughout the United States and Mexico. In analyzing the Iowa record (pers. comm. to T. H. Kent, 1993), he offers the following:

"The best features to distinguish these two [Western and Yellow-bellied] in the field are (in descending order of reliability):

- 1). Wing color. To my knowledge there is absolutely no overlap in this feature. Even worn Yellow-bellieds in summer/fall show the dark wings and contrasting lemon edgings typical of the species. By comparison all Westerns of both forms have brownish wings with dingier, less-contrasting yellow edging. The Iowa bird's wings are typical of Western and outside the range of variation in Yellow-bellied in my experience.
- 2). Upperpart coloration. This also seems pretty reliable (with little or no overlap) but is harder to judge on a single bird. The Iowa bird's upperparts appear strongly tinged with olive, again typical of Western and, in my opinion, outside the range of even a worn Yellow-bellied.
- 3). Eye ring. Although variable in both species I again believe that there is little overlap when eye ring extent, color, and shape are combined. The Iowa bird's eye ring is extensively "almond-shaped", in fact toward the extreme in Western and thus quite distinct from typical Yellow-bellied. The coloration, a "plain" lemon rather than bright lemon, is also typical of Western and not of Yellow-bellied.
- 4). Other visual features. The breast of the Iowa bird is tinged mustard yellow. I believe that (like the underwing color) this is more typical of Western, Yellow-bellied being lemon here with a dusky suffusion giving it a "greenish" appearance. The crown is certainly peaked on the Iowa bird, as suggestive of Western according to Kenn Kaufman. I have not critically evaluated variation in this although our Yellow-bellieds on the Farallons did seem to have subtly rounder (and smaller?) heads. The tail of the Iowa bird seems consistent in length with Western although this is again hard to judge in the field on a single bird. The behavior of the Iowa bird seems typical of what we see in Westerns (Westerns often flick their tail without flicking wings.)
- 5). Call note.

To summarize, all of the more important visual characters match Western Flycatcher with several falling outside the range of Yellow-bellied in my experience. When all of these features are combined...there is little doubt that your bird was a Western Flycatcher."

We were certain that we had a "Western" flycatcher, but which one? On 16 December 1990 a Pacific-slope Flycatcher was identified during a Christmas Bird Count in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. This was the first record of *Empidonax difficilis* east of Kansas (Maloney and Morrin 1991, Haas 1991). On the subsequent Christmas Bird Count, 15 December 1991, a Pacific-slope Flycatcher was again identified (Witmer 1992). On both of those occasions the bird uttered a one-syllable call note which was recorded. The only unusual notes that any of us heard at Lake Ahquabi could not be directly attributable to the bird in question since it did not call when it was in sight. A calling bird might not have been particularly helpful in absolute identification, however, as even experts take a conservative approach in identifying by call. Kevin Zimmer (pers. comm. to T. H. Kent, 1993) states, "In my experience, migrant Westerns (of either form) are either silent or utter a one-syllabled SEET note (differences exist between forms in this single-note call, but it would take a very practiced ear to confidently base the ID on call-note alone)." Pyle refers to a yet unpublished article on clinal variations in the song and call notes of the two species in Washington and British Columbia (pers. comm. to T. H. Kent, 1993), a factor lending even more credence to the difficulty in separation of the two species.

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FIELD REPORTS--FALL 1993

THOMAS H. KENT AND JAMES L. FULLER

WEATHER AND HABITAT CONDITIONS

June through August precipitation statewide totaled 26.81 inches or 14.22 inches more than normal. Beginning in September, precipitation was below normal which led to falling water levels in most habitats throughout the state.

August continued a nine-month string of supernormal precipitation with statewide averages of 8.22 inches (nearly twice normal). The temperatures were very cool during the first week but warmth and humidity prevailed from the 9th through the 29th. A change in the jet stream brought back cooler (and drier!) conditions at month's end.

September finally broke the string of flooding rains with the first monthly average below normal since October 1992. However, the month's average temperature was the coolest September since records began in 1873!

October was relatively uneventful but temperatures were again below normal as was precipitation. A hard freeze occurred on the 10th.

November was fairly quiet with only a winter storm on the 24-25th when northwestern Iowa was covered with three to ten inches of snow. The rest of the state received only light snow but there was some freezing rain and sleet. Both total precipitation and temperatures were below normal.



Tom Kent



Jim Fuller

Table 1. Statewide Temperature and Precipitation with Deviation from Normal.

	Temperature, F	Precipitation inches
	Mean (Deviation)	Mean (Deviation)
August	72.7 (+1.0)	8.22 (+4.19)
September	57.9 (-5.5)	3.75 (-0.08)
October	49.7 (-2.4)	1.33 (-1.20)
November	34.6 (-2.8)	1.08 (-0.70)

GENERAL TRENDS

Grebes were reported in good numbers this fall, including six Westerns and one Red-necked. In spite of all of the water present, the numbers of Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets was not impressive, but Cattle Egrets staged a major invasion with nesting for only the third time. Although there was extensive water habitat in August, the number of shorebirds appeared to be below average, but more than during the spring period this year. The number of waterfowl was not impressive, but they may have passed through over time without large peaks. More scoters than usual were reported. Raptor movements are being monitored in Marshall and Pottawattamie counties, which hopefully will give us a better picture of their fall migration in Iowa. Snowy Owls and, especially, Red-breasted Nuthatches staged major invasions.

Warblers were reported in high concentrations by a number of observers, such as the 260 birds of 15 species seen at Hickory Hill Park by Randy Pinkston on 6 September. Winter finches were present in small numbers with no evidence of an invasion year for any species.

UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

Two potentially new state birds, Reddish Egret and Ross's Gull, were photographed and seen by many. The egret was quite unexpected, because it rarely strays from coastal waters. For unexplained reasons, it showed up in several other northern states this fall. Ross's Gull has occurred once each in four states touching Iowa, but still came as a big surprise, especially at a record early date. A Gyrfalcon at the fall I.O.U. meeting would be only the second record and was also very early. Other accidental species were Laughing Gull, California Gull, and Sabine's Gull. A Black-bellied Whistling-Duck was shot in western Iowa. Other records of this species have been considered possible escapees.

SPECIES DATA

(* = documented, [] = record date, m. ob. = many observers)

Common Loon: The first was at Red Rock Res. on 17 Oct (PHA/RIA). The peak was 9 at Coralville Res. on 10 Nov (DRP). The last 2 were at Rathbun Res. on 28 Nov (TNJ).

Pied-billed Grebe: 4 juv. at Cardinal M. on 31 Aug suggested late nesting (DeC). The high count was 106 at Prairie L. in Dickinson Co. on 8 Sep (LAS).

Horned Grebe: The first were 8 at Red Rock Res. on 10 Oct (JSi). From 1 to 8 were reported from 10 other locations, the last at Rathbun Res. on 26 Nov (TNJ).

Red-necked Grebe: 1 was at Saylorville Res. on 21-22 Nov (BEn, *AMJ).

Eared Grebe: 2 ad. and 1 yg. were at Grover's L. in Dickinson Co. on 21 Aug (LAS). Others were 1 at Silver L. in Worth Co. on 24 Sep (THK), 3 at different locations in Dickinson Co. from 24 to 26 Sep (m.ob.), 4 on IPL Ponds on 25 Sep (BKP/LJP), and 1 near Doon in Lyon Co. on 20 Oct (JV).

Western Grebe: 1 at Grover's L. on 15 Aug (NB) may have been the same as 1 seen at West Hottes L. on 21 Aug and 25-26 Sep (m.ob.). Others were at Red Rock Res. on 10, 17, 23, and 31 Oct (RLC, JSi, PHA/RIA, MPr), at L. Manawa on 12, 17 Oct (BKP/LJP), at Trumbull L. on 29 Oct (MMB), at Hickory Grove P. in Story Co. on 21 Nov (MPr), and at Saylorville Res. on 22, 28 Nov (AMJ, BEn).

American White Pelican: 1 was at Swan L. in Johnson Co. on 6 Aug (THK). High counts were 1,200 at Hitchcock N.A. in Pottawattamie Co. on 20 Sep, 1,000 at Red Rock Res. on 12 Sep (DCP), 550 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 14 Sep (MCK), and 119 at Coralville Res. on 22 Aug (DRP). There were still 3 at Red Rock Res. on 28 Nov (JSi) and 2 at Rathbun Res. on 29 Nov (TNJ).

Double-crested Cormorant: High counts were 3,000 at Runnells A. on 3 Oct (JSi), 1,100 at Coralville Res. on 8 Oct (THK), and 440 at Hitchcock N.A. on 9 Oct (BKP/LJP).

American Bittern: The only report was of 1 in Clay Co. on 26 Sep (MPr).

Least Bittern: At Zirbel Sl. in Cerro Gordo Co., 5 were seen on 4 Aug and 3 on 1 Sep (CJF). At Snake Creek M. in Greene Co., 1 was seen on 30 Sep (DHe).

Great Blue Heron: A nest found on 8 Aug near Sycamore Access was 0.5 miles away from the main colony at Saylorville Res. (RIC).

Great Egret: High counts were 104 on 17 Oct at Runnells W.A. (PHA/RIA), 89 at Saylorville Res. on 14 Aug (BEn), 60 at Coralville Res. on 8 Oct (THK), 34 in Fremont Co. on 7 Aug (BKP/LJP), and 26 at Grammer Grove in Marshall Co. on 9 Oct (PHA/RIA).

Little Blue Heron: 2 ad. were in Fremont Co. on 7 Aug (BKP/LJP).

Reddish Egret: An imm. bird was studied and photographed w of Colfax in Jasper Co. from 5 to 10 Sep (*TS, *AMJ, *PCP, *WRS, *THK, *PHA, *JLF, *RLC, *DRP, *CE).

Cattle Egret: Reports were from 10 counties with high counts of 234 in Mills Co. on 7 Aug (BKP/LJP), 200 in Fremont Co. on 2 Aug (BKP/LJP), 50 at Rathbun Res. on 18 Sep (TNJ), and 35 in Monona Co. on 1 Oct (PE). On 9 Aug, 29 including yg. on a nest were seen at the Martin Marietta quarry at Marshalltown (JJD). The last 2 were there on 14 Nov (MPr, BPr).

Green-backed Heron: The last were 2 at Swan L. in Johnson Co. on 8 Oct (THK).

- Black-crowned Night-Heron:** Singles were at Marshalltown on 9 Aug (JJD) and 18 Sep (MPR) and at Lost Island L. on 26 Sep (MPR). On 29 Sep, 12 were at Zirbel Sl. (RGo), and on 24 Oct 2 imm. were in Clay Co. (LAS).
- Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:** 2 were in Fremont Co. on 20 Aug (BKP/LJP).
- Black-bellied Whistling-Duck:** 1 was shot at Blue L. in Monona Co. on 24 Oct (TJH-photos, *JJD).
- Tundra Swan:** 1 ad. was reported near Missouri Valley on 20-22 Nov (PE, BKP/LJP).
- Trumpeter Swan:** Reports without details were received from two locations.
- Greater White-fronted Goose:** There were only three reports.
- Snow Goose:** An imm. was at Red Rock Res. on 7 Sep (JLF). By 11 Nov there were 450,000 at De Soto N.W.R. (BKP/LJP). A tame hybrid blue/canada goose was photographed at close range at Marshalltown on 6 Oct (*MS, photos by Garry Brandenburg).
- Ross's Goose:** From 1 to 7 were seen at De Soto N.W.R. from 10 to 22 Nov (BKP/LJP, PE).
- Wood Duck:** 400 were at Kettleson Hogsback A. on 11 Sep (LAS).
- Green-winged Teal:** 200 were at Runnells A. on 3 Oct (JSi).
- American Black Duck:** The first was at Coralville Res. on 11 Oct (DRP).
- Mallard:** 10,700 were at Saylorville Res. on 28 Nov (BEn).
- Blue-winged Teal:** 1,500 were at Rathbun Res. on 25 Sep (RLC).
- Northern Shoveler:** 90 were at Rathbun Res. on 7 Nov (RLC). The last were 3 at De Soto N.W.R. on 18 Nov (BKP/LJP).
- Gadwall:** 120 were at L. Manawa on 22 Oct (BKP/LJP).
- Redhead:** 72 were at Rathbun Res. on 20 Nov (RLC).
- Ring-necked Duck:** Up to 4 summering birds remained at Swan L. in Johnson Co. to at least 3 Sep (THK, DRP, JLF).
- Greater Scaup:** An imm. male was at Pleasant Creek S.P. in Linn Co. on 13 Nov (CE-details).
- Lesser Scaup:** 5,000 were at Saylorville Res. on 7 Nov (BEn).
- Oldsquaw:** Sightings were from IPL Ponds on 6 Nov (BKP/LJP), L. Manawa on 17, 23 Nov (BKP/LJP), Pleasant Creek S.P. with 1 or 2 on 26-28 Nov (DLD, JLF), and Red Rock Res. with 2 on 28 Nov (JSi).
- Black Scoter:** Reports were of females or immatures with 1 or 2 at Pleasant Creek S.P. from 3 Nov (CE) to 28 Nov (m.ob.)(3rd latest) and 1 at Rock Creek S.P. on 13, 20 Nov (MPR, DRP).
- Surf Scoter:** Singles were at L. Manawa on 6 Nov (BKP/LJP) and Rathbun Res. on 7 Nov (RLC, PHA/RIA).
- White-winged Scoter:** The first were 4 at Red Rock Res. on 1 Nov (PCP). Males were at Moorehead P. in Ida Co. on 6 Nov (PE) and Pleasant Creek S.P. on 28, 30 Nov (THK, JLF). Females or immatures were found at Pleasant Creek S.P. on 4 Nov (CE, THK), at Silver L. in Worth Co. on 8 Nov (RGo), at Blue L. on 11 Nov (PE), and near Rathbun Res. on 19-26 Nov (TNJ, RLC).
- Common Goldeneye:** The first were on 30 Oct at Pleasant Creek S.P. (CE) and IPL Ponds (BKP/LJP).
- Bufflehead:** 1 was at Lansing on 27 Nov (DRP).
- Hooded Merganser:** A female was on Swan L. in Johnson Co. on 3 Sep (THK). The high count was 78 at Saylorville Res. on 7 Nov (AMJ).
- Common Merganser:** 1,950 were at Saylorville Res. on 28 Nov (BEn).
- Red-breasted Merganser:** 50 were at Red Rock Res. on 20 Nov (DRP). A female lingered at Decorah to 30 Nov (DeC).
- Ruddy Duck:** High counts were 210 at L. Manawa on 3 Nov (BKP/LJP) and 292 at Saylorville Res. on 7 Nov (BEn).
- Turkey Vulture:** The high count at Hitchcock N.A. was 23 on 9 Oct (BKP/LJP). The last was at Saylorville Res. on 7 Nov (AMJ).
- Osprey:** The first was at Trumbull L. on 6 Aug (LAS). The last was at L. Macbride on 17 Oct (CE). The peak at Hitchcock N.A. was 8 on 20 Sep (BKP/LJP).
- Bald Eagle:** The first was at Bays Branch on 16 Aug (BEh).
- Northern Harrier:** The peak at Hitchcock N. A. was 20 on 20 Oct (BKP/LJP).
- Sharp-shinned Hawk:** 1 was at Shimek F. in Lee Co. on 1 Aug (RIC-details). A first-fall female, banded in Duluth on 12 Sep, was a window-kill near Iowa City on 4 Oct (Joan Thompson, THK).



*Hybrid Snow/Canada Goose, Marshalltown
6 Oct 1993, Photo by Garry Brandenburg*

High counts were at Algona with 23 on 21 Sep (MCK), Hitchcock N.A. with 55 on 22 Sep (BKP/LJP), and Grammer Grove with 37 on 22 Sep, 93 on 1 Oct, and 64 on 10 Oct (BPr).

Cooper's Hawk: High counts were 3 were at Algona on 21 Sep (MCK) and 16 at Hitchcock N.A. on 23 Sep (BKP/LJP).

Northern Goshawk: A male was banded s of Boone on 10 Oct (MDC), and an imm. was seen at Lost Island L in Palo Alto Co. on 11 Nov (*LAS).

Red-shouldered Hawk: 5 were sighted at Grammer Grove from 6 Sep to 10 Oct (BPr), and 1 was over Iowa City on 10 Oct (DRP).

Broad-winged Hawk: An imm. was seen n of Iowa City on 2 Aug (THK). High counts were at Algona with 454 on 20 Sep and 1,085 on 21 Sep (MCK), at Grammer Grove with 423 on 22 Sep (BPr), and Hitchcock N.A. with 30 on 22 Sep (BKP/LJP).

Swainson's Hawk: All reports were from hawk watches with 15 on 28 Sep and 13 on 29 Sep at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP) and 2 at Grammer Grove on 28 Sep (BPr).

Red-tailed Hawk: High counts were 71 on 28 Sep at Grammer Grove (BPr) and 80 on 9 Oct at Hitchcock N.A. A Harlan's Hawk was seen in Marshall Co. on 16 and 23 Oct (MPr, BPr).

Golden Eagle: The first was at Grammer Grove on 22 Sep (BPr)[3rd earliest]. One was caught and banded s of Boone on 17 Oct (MDC). Other early sightings were immatures at Hitchcock N.A. on 2 and 9 Oct (BKP/LJP). Singles were also seen in Allamakee, Cerro Gordo, Clayton, and Winnebago counties (CLF, RGo, JSi, DRP).

American Kestrel: The peak at Hitchcock N.A. was 6 on 23 Sep (BKP/LJP), which seems less than expected.

Merlin: The first was at Hitchcock N.A. on 6 Sep (BKP/LJP). There were 23 birds reported from 11 locations with 15 in Sep, 4 in Oct, and 4 in Nov.

Peregrine Falcon: The first was w of Colfax on 6 Sep (THK). A male of the tundra race was caught and banded s of Boone on 27 Sep (MDC). There were 17 birds reported from 11 locations with all but one in Sep. The other was at Hitchcock N.A. on 4 Nov (BKP/LJP).

Gyr Falcon: A large, plain, gray falcon was seen near Kettleson Hoggsback in Dickinson Co. on 26 Sep (*TS, *JRC, *MJ, *WRS, *JSi). Another report is referred to the Records Committee.

Prairie Falcon: 1 was at Union Slough N.W.R on 29 Oct (*THK).

Yellow Rail: 1 was seen at 3 feet at Goose Lake W.A in Kossuth Co. on 4 Oct (CP), and another at 10 feet at Fomey L on 22 Oct (CP)[2nd latest].

Virginia Rail: An ad. was seen feeding a downy yg. on 29 Aug at Snake Creek M. (JSi), indicating very late nesting.

Sora: The only report was from Mingo in Jasper Co. on 14 Aug (GJB).

American Coot: 2,500 were at Red Rock Res. on 23 Oct (RLC).

Sandhill Crane: Reports include 1 at Hayden Prairie on 5 Sep (JLF), 1 w of Onawa on 1 Oct (PE), and 2 s of Cherokee on 14 Oct (MMB).

Black-bellied Plover: The first were at Rathbun Res. on 10 Aug (TNJ) and the last w of Onawa on 4 Nov (PE).

Lesser Golden-Plover: The first were 50 at Akron on 10 Sep (JV), and the last were 2 at Red Rock Res. on 3 Nov (MPr). From 3 to 45 were reported from 6 other sites.

Semipalmated Plover: The first were on 6 Aug at Cardinal M. in Winneshiek Co. (DeC) and Fremont Co. (BKP/LJP), and the last s of Liscomb on 31 Aug (MPr).

Killdeer: The high count was 200 at Akron on 10 Sep (JV) and at Coralville Res. on 25 Oct (THK).

American Avocet: Reports include 4 at Rathbun Res. on 10 Aug (TNJ), 1 at IPL Ponds on 19 Sep (BKP/LJP), 1 at Saylorville Res. on 25 Sep (BEn), 8 at Beeds L. in Franklin Co. on 26 Sep (MPr), and 1 at Colo Ponds on 2 Oct (HZ).

Greater Yellowlegs: The high count was 50 in Fremont Co. on 7 Aug (BKP/LJP). The last was at Red Rock Res. on 28 Nov (JSi).

Lesser Yellowlegs: The high count was 100 in Fremont Co. on 7 Aug (BKP/LJP). The last was in Lyon Co. on 22 Oct (JV).

Solitary Sandpiper: The last was in Dickinson Co. on 26 Sep (THK).

Willet: 1 or 2 were at Rathbun Res. from 10 to 16 Aug (TNJ, RLC).

Spotted Sandpiper: 1 was at Lower Gar L. in Dickinson Co. on 23 Oct (LAS), which is rather late but not a record.

Marbled Godwit: 3 were in Fremont Co. on 6 Aug (BKP/LJP), and 1 was there on 14 Aug (PHA/RIA). On 16 Aug, 1 was near Gruver in Emmet Co. (DHe).

Ruddy Turnstone: The only 1 reported was from IPL Ponds on 7 Aug (BKP/LJP).

Sanderling: Reports include 2 at Rathbun Res. on 5 Sep (TNJ), 3 at Red Rock Res. on 6 Sep (AMJ), 1-5 at IPL Ponds from 19 Sep to 10 Oct (BKP/LJP), and 1 at Coralville Res. on 22 Oct (DRP).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: 30 were at Rathbun Res. on 31 Aug (RLC).

Least Sandpiper: The last was at Coralville Res. on 11 Nov (THK).

- Baird's Sandpiper:** The first were 5 s of Liscomb on 20 Aug (MPR), and the last was 1 at Coralville Res. on 8 Oct (THK).
- Pectoral Sandpiper:** The high count was 250 in Fremont Co. on 2 Aug (BKP/LJP). The last was at Coralville Res. on 11 Nov (THK).
- Dunlin:** The first was at Rush L. in Palo Alto Co. on 7 Oct (MMB). High count was 75 at Coralville Res. on 16 Oct (THK). The last was at IPL Ponds on 7 Nov (BKP/LJP).
- Silt Sandpiper:** The peak was 40 on 2 Sep in Kossuth Co. (MCK). The last was at Coralville Res. on 6 Oct (DRP).
- Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** The first were 14 in Fremont Co. on 6 Aug with a peak of 25 there on 20 Aug (BKP/LJP). There were reports from 5 other locations, with the last in Kossuth Co. on 14 Sep (MCK).
- Short-billed Dowitcher:** None were reported, which seems unusual.
- Long-billed Dowitcher:** Juveniles molting to basic plumage were reported from 6 locations. The first were 15 near Buffalo Center in Winnebago Co. on 24 Sep (THK). The last were 4 in Cerro Gordo Co. on 24 Oct (RGo).
- Common Snipe:** The high count was 25 at Coralville Res. on 6 Nov (THK).
- American Woodcock:** Singles were seen at Mason City on 23 and 27 Oct (RGo).
- Red-necked Phalarope:** 1 was in Kossuth Co. on 2 Sep (MCK).
- Laughing Gull:** A juvenile was at Saylorville Res. on 18 Sep (*AMJ, RIA-photo).
- Franklin's Gull:** The first was at Rathbun Res. on 8 Aug, and the last 4 were in Mills Co. on 12 Nov (BKP/LJP). The high counts were 13,000 at Saylorville Res. on 2 Oct (RIC), 10,000 at Rathbun Res. on 25 Sep (RLC), and 3,500 at IPL Ponds on 8 Oct (BKP/LJP).
- Bonaparte's Gull:** The first was at Rathbun Res. on 25 Sep (RLC), and the last at L. Manawa on 25 Nov (BKP/LJP). The high counts were 90 at Rathbun Res. on 30 Oct (RLC), 94 at L. Manawa on 3 Nov (BKP/LJP), and 401 at Saylorville Res. on 7 Nov (BEN).
- Ring-billed Gull:** An ad. was seen in Jasper Co. on 2 Aug (DRP).
- California Gull:** An ad. was described at Carter L. in Pottawattamie Co. on 21 and 23 Nov (*WRS, *TEB, *BKP/LJP). Finally, this little bit of Iowa's land on the west side of the Missouri River is paying dividends.
- Herring Gull:** 3 were at Spirit L. by 25 Sep (THK).
- Thayer's Gull:** 1 first-winter bird was at Red Rock Res. on 13 Nov (*DRP, *RIC, *THK).
- Ross's Gull:** An ad. molting to basic plumage was at Red Rock Res. on 31 Oct and early on 1 Nov (*JLF, *AMJ, *THK-photo, *MPR, *DRP, *PCP-photo, *PHA, *RLC, RIA-photo).
- Sabine's Gull:** A juvenile was at Red Rock Res. from 21 to 23 Oct (*MPR).
- Caspian Tern:** The first was at Clear L. on 10 Aug (CJF), and the last was at Rathbun Res. on 25 Sep (RLC). From 2 to 8 were reported from four other locations.
- Least Tern:** 1 was at Marshalltown on 19 Aug (*MS).
- Black Tern:** The last 2 were at Rathbun Res. on 31 Aug (RLC).
- Black-billed Cuckoo:** The last was at Lime Creek N.C. in Cerro Gordo Co. on 8 Sep (CJF, RGo).
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** The last were in Warren Co. on 3 Oct (JSi) and Pottawattamie Co. on 4 Oct (BKP/LJP).
- Barn Owl:** 6 young Barn Owls were found in a barn in Boone Co. on 29 Oct; 1 fledged and the others were caught and banded. (BEH)
- Great Horned Owl:** An arctic type was near Gruver in Emmet Co. on 24 Nov (DHe).
- Snowy Owl:** The first was at Mercy Hospital in Des Moines on 18 Oct (photo in newsletter sent by AMJ). At least 7 others were reported from the following counties: Scott, Appanoose, Monroe, Marshall, Fremont (2), and Lyon. The Monroe Co. bird was photographed (RIA) and was later found dead on 11 Nov (DRP).
- Long-eared Owl:** 2 were at Wolf Creek P. in Grundy Co. on 11 Nov (MPR).
- Short-eared Owl:** 1 was in Boone Co. on 28 Oct (SRL).
- Common Nighthawk:** High counts were 102 in Des Moines on 28 Aug (RIC) and 385 in Fairfield on 21 Sep (DCP). The last was in Iowa City on 10 Oct (DRP).
- Chimney Swift:** The swifts returned to Fairfield! On 2 Oct, Diane Porter counted 4,000, and 45 remained to 11 Oct. Tying this last date were 4 at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP).
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** The last was at Sioux Center on 20 Oct (JV).
- Red-headed Woodpecker:** 33 were migrating at Hitchcock N.A. on 17 Sep (BKP/LJP).



*Snowy Owl, Monroe County
2 Nov 1993, Photo by Reid Allen*

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Migration may have been early this year with 2 at Moorehead P. on 4 Sep (PE) and peaks of 10 in Appanoose Co. on 25, 26 Sep (RLC, TNJ).

Northern Flicker: Migration in NW Iowa was noted from 17 to 25 Sep (JV) and on 24 Sep (DeC, THK).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: The first was near Norwalk on 28 Aug (AMJ). The last was at Hitchcock N.A. on 26 Sep (BKP/LJP).

Eastern Wood-Pewee: The last was in Ida Co. on 2 Oct (PE).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: The first was at Moorehead P. on 19 Aug (PE). A peak of 4 was at Call S.P. in Kossuth Co. on 29 Aug (MCK). September sightings included singles at Fairfield on the 5th (DCP) and in Johnson (DRP) and Jasper counties (PCP) on the 6th.

Acadian Flycatcher: 2 were still singing at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 8 Aug (DCP), and 1 was in Appanoose Co. on 14 Aug (RLC).

Alder Flycatcher: A singing bird was still in Warren Co. on 29 Aug (AMJ-details)[2nd latest].

Least Flycatcher: The only reports were 1 at Moorehead P. on 18 Aug (PE) and 3 at Algona on 22 Sep (MCK).

Eastern Phoebe: The last was in Madison Co. on 23 Oct (JSi).

Great Crested Flycatcher: 1 was still at Effigy Mounds N.M. on 8 Nov (*DeC)[record latest].

Tree Swallow: A peak of 500 was at Coralville Res. on 25 Sep (DRP), and 200 were still at Runnells A. on 24 Oct (JSi).

Bank Swallow: 50 were in Fremont Co. on 7 Aug (BKP/LJP).

Cliff Swallow: 300 were at Cardinal M. on 5 Sep (DeC).

Barn Swallow: High counts were 250 at L. Manawa on 5 Sep (BKP/LJP) and 90 at Cardinal M. on 15 Sep (DeC). The last was in Madison Co. on 23 Oct (JSi).

Blue Jay: Migrating flocks included 150 across N Iowa on 24 Sep (THK), 830 at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP, LJP) and 228 at Saylorville Res. (BEn) on 25 Sep, and 30 in W Sioux Co. on 22 Oct (JV).

Black-capped Chickadee: A record count for one bush was 20 near Fairfield on 18 Sep (DCP).

Tufted Titmouse: 16 were in Appanoose Co. on 17 Oct (RLC).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: A massive invasion occurred and started early with reports from 11 sites in August. The first in Iowa City on 5 Aug (JLF) may have been the same bird reported for the summer period. The next was at Fairfield on 11 Aug (CAA). For the period, there were 33 reports of at least 75 birds, but this likely represents only the tip of the iceberg. An apparent summering bird was seen in Sioux Center in mid-July (Tina Van Dyke fide JV) and mid-August (JV).

Brown Creeper: The first was at Sioux Center on 18 Sep (JV).

Carolina Wren: A second nesting in a carport at Iowa City fledged young on 17 Aug (THK).

House Wren: The last was at Coralville Res. on 11 Oct (THK, DRP).

Winter Wren: The first was at Sioux Center on 3 Sep (JV). There were 14 reports of 1 or 2 birds, plus another of 15 birds at Decorah on 9 Oct (DeC).

Sedge Wren: 1 heard nw of Lamoni on 7 Aug was at the southern edge of the nesting range (JDG). October reports were 2 at Williams Prairie in Johnson Co. on the 4th (DRP), and 1 at Lime Creek N.C. on the 20th (RGo).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: The first were 3 on 23 Sep at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK). There were 2 still at Effigy Mounds N.M. on 28 Nov (DRP).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: The first was at Grammer Grove on 8 Sep (MPR). The peak was 25 at Fairfield on 23 Sep (DCP). The last was at DeSoto N.W.R. on 20 Nov (PE).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: A late bird was at Mini Wakan S. P. in Dickinson Co. on 26 Sep (LAS)[2nd latest].

Veery: The only reports were singles at Liscomb on 29 Aug (MPR, BPr) and at Iowa City on 6 Sep (DRP).

Swainson's Thrush: The first was in Warren Co. on 28 Aug (AMJ). The last was in Dickinson Co. on 26 Sep (MPR).

Hermit Thrush: The first were on 4 Oct, with 1 at Mason City (CJF) and 2 at Marshalltown (Betty Savage fide MPR). The last was around an Algona feeder 26-30 Nov (Sharon Amdorfer fide MCK).

Wood Thrush: An ad. was feeding 3 yg. at Moorehead P. on 25 Aug (PE).

American Robin: The largest flocks reported were 300 at Oak Grove P. in Sioux Co. on 22 Oct, and 585 at Hitchcock N.A. on 28 Oct (BKP/LJP).

Gray Catbird: The last was at Iowa City on 10 Nov (THK).

Northern Mockingbird: The only report was 1 on 9 Aug near Hendrickson M. (MPR).

Brown Thrasher: The last were singles on 12 Nov at Red Rock Res. (THK) and 15 Nov at L. Ahquabi (JSi).

Winter Pipit: The first were 2 on 2 Oct at a pond n of Ogden (MPR). A peak of 20 was in W Sioux Co. on 27 Oct (JV), and 4 were still at Red Rock Res. on 13 Nov (AMJ).

Cedar Waxwing: A flock of 400 was in Appanoose Co. on 31 Oct (RLC).

Northern Shrike: There were 6 reports, all of singles: at Cardinal M. on 3 Nov (DeC), in Allamakee Co. on 6 Nov (JiS), at Trumbull L. on 11 Nov (*LAS), in W Sioux Co. on 17 Nov (JV), at Rock Creek S.P. in Jasper Co. on 20 Nov (DRP-details, BPr-details), and near Mason City on 24 Nov (CJF-details, RGo).

Loggerhead Shrike: August reports of 1-3 were from Cass, Cerro Gordo, Jasper, and Polk counties. The last were singles in Monroe Co. on 10 Nov (MPr), at Red Rock Res. on 11 Nov (CE), and in Decatur Co. on 21 Nov (JiS).

Bell's Vireo: 1 was calling on 28 Aug in Muscatine Co. (PCP).

Solitary Vireo: The first was at Moorehead P. 28 Aug (PE). The last was a singing bird at Woodland Mounds Pre. in Warren Co. on 3 Oct (JiS).

Yellow-throated Vireo: The only reports were singles at Fairfield on 10 Sep (DCP), Cardinal M. on 18 Sep (DeC), and Coralville Res. on 19 Sep (CE).

Philadelphia Vireo: There were 8 reports of 1 or 2 birds, with the last on 24 Sep in Warren Co. (AMJ).

Red-eyed Vireo: 12 were at Cardinal M. on 18 Sep (DeC), and 1 was feeding a cowbird at Call S.P. on 29 Sep (MCK).

Blue-winged Warbler: 1 was at Iowa City on 6 Sep (CE).

Golden-winged Warbler: There were 9 reports of 1 or 2 birds with the first on 28 Aug at Grammer Grove (MPr) and the last on 23 Sep at Fairfield (DCP).

Tennessee Warbler: The first was a single on 19 Aug at Moorehead P. (PE). Large numbers were reported, with 50 at Moorehead P. on 28 Aug (PE), 40 at Iowa City on 6 Sep (DRP), and 125 at Moorehead P. on 18 Sep (PE). One was drinking from a hummingbird feeder n of Iowa City from 3 to 8 Sep (JLF). October sightings were singles on the 9th at Iowa City (THK) and Decorah (DeC-details), and the 20th at Fairfield (DCP-details).

Orange-crowned Warbler: The first were 2 in Warren Co. on 29 Aug (AMJ). A peak of 4 was on 27 Sep in Wright Co. (PE), and the last was at Mason City on 21 Oct (CJF).

Nashville Warbler: The first was at Moorehead P. on 20 Aug (PE), and the last was at Fairfield on 19 Oct (DCP). High count was 10 at Iowa City on 6 Sep (DRP).

Northern Parula: There were seven reports of single birds, with the last on 19 Sep at Iowa City (DRP).

Yellow Warbler: The last was on 23 Sep at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: This species was widely seen this fall, with 13 reports of 67 birds. The first was at Iowa City on 23 Aug (THK). The high count was 30 on 6 Sep at Iowa City (DRP). The last was at Fairfield on 17 Oct (DCP-details)[2nd latest].

Magnolia Warbler: The first were 4 on 28 Aug at Grammer Grove P. (MPr). High count was 20 at Iowa City on 6 Sep (DRP). The last was at Moorehead P. on 28 Sep (PE).

Cape May Warbler: There was an unusually high number of reports for this species (17) describing 1-4 birds, many of which were from cemeteries. The first was in Louisa Co. on 28 Aug (PCP). The last was at Battle Creek Cemetery on 17 Oct (PE-details). (in Ida Co.?)

Black-throated Blue Warbler: Females were at Moorehead P. on 17 Sep (PE-details) and at Des Moines on 22 Sep (BEN), 2 males were at Parker's Woods in Mason City on 23 Sep (RGo), and a male was at Decorah on 8 Oct (DeC).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: The first was in Grundy Co. on 20 Sep (MPr). The last were 2 at DeSoto N.W.R. on 22 Nov (BKP/ LJP).

Black-throated Green Warbler: The first was in Marshall Co. on 28 Aug (RW). The peak was 4 on 18 Sep at Cardinal M. (DeC). The last was 1 on 7 Oct at Fairfield (DCP).

Blackburnian Warbler: This species was widely reported, with singles in NW Iowa on 15 Aug at Algona (MCK) and Trumbull L. (LAS). The high count was 7 on 3 Sep in Appanoose Co. (RLC) and on 6 Sep at Iowa City (DRP). The last was at Pine Lake S.P. on 21 Sep (MPr).

Pine Warbler: Single birds were sighted at Grammer Grove on 18 Sep (Russ Widner fide MPr-details), in Warren Co. on 24 Sep (AMJ-details), and at Wolf Creek P. on 4 Oct (*MPr)[3rd latest].

Palm Warbler: An early migrant was in Warren Co. on 28 Aug (AMJ)[2nd earliest].

Bay-breasted Warbler: This species is more common during fall than spring. This year more than 100 birds were reported by 15 contributors, with a peak of 25 on 6 Sep at Iowa City (DRP). The first were in Jasper Co. on 23 Aug (MPr). The last was in Sioux Co. on 2 Oct (JV).

Blackpoll Warbler: The first was at Trumbull L. on 27 Aug. The high count and last were 5 in Jasper Co. on 6 Sep (GJB).

Black-and-white Warbler: The first were 2 on 14 Aug at Effigy Mounds N.M. (DeC). The peak was 17 at Iowa City on 6 Sep (DRP). The last was at Wolf Creek P. on 27 Sep (MPr).

American Redstart: 35 were at Iowa City on 6 Sep (DRP). The last was in Appanoose Co. on 25 Sep (RLC).

Ovenbird: A late bird was n of Iowa City on 1 Oct (JLF)[3rd latest].

Northern Waterthrush: 5 were in Clay Co. on 17 Aug (LAS). The last was at Fairfield on 11 Sep (DCP).

Mourning Warbler: 1 or 2 birds were reported from Grammer Grove from 28 Aug to 15 Sep (MPR), and 2 were in Warren Co. on 29 Aug (AMJ).

Hooded Warbler: A singing male was at Hickory Hill P. on 5-6 Sep (CE)[2nd latest].

Wilson's Warbler: The first were 2 on 20 Aug at Moorehead P. (PE), and the last was 1 on 23 Sep at Fairfield (DCP).

Canada Warbler: The first was at Moorehead P. on 20 Aug (PE). The peak was on 28-29 Aug, with 10 at Moorehead P. (PE) and 8 in Kossuth Co. (MCK). The last was at Pleasant Creek S.P. on 26 Sep (CE).

Yellow-breasted Chat: This species is rare in NW Iowa, so 1 in Clay Co. on 8 Aug (LAS) was unusual.

Summer Tanager: A pair was constructing a nest at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 8 Aug (DCP).

Scarlet Tanager: The last was in Appanoose Co. on 25 Sep (RLC).

Northern Cardinal: A male was feeding a recently fledged young in Polk Co. on 15 Sep (RIC).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: An imm. was still at Mason City on 21 Oct (CJF).

Blue Grosbeak: Near Hawarden in Sioux Co. an imm. was sighted on 28 Aug, and on 3 Sep a female was feeding a cowbird (JV).

Indigo Bunting: 5, including a singing bird, were the last at Cardinal M. on 15 Sep (DeC).

Dickcissel: The last was 1 at Cardinal M. on 5 Sep (DeC).

Rufous-sided Towhee: A bird of the western "spotted" race was at Moorehead P. on 4 Oct and 2 were there on 12 Oct (PE). Others were at a Clive feeder on 20 Oct (JRC) and in Marion Co. on 31 Oct (RLC).

American Tree Sparrow: The first was in Franklin Co. on 26 Oct (MPR).

Chipping Sparrow: November reports were of singles in Boone Co. on the 2nd (SRL), at a Clive feeder on the 11th (JRC), and in Ida Co. on the 14th (PE).

Field Sparrow: 1 was still at Red Rock Res. on 24 Oct (JIS).

Vesper Sparrow: The last was in Sioux Co. on 16 Oct (JV).

Lark Sparrow: The only report was 1 in Warren Co. on 29 Aug (AMJ).

Savannah Sparrow: The last was in Franklin Co. on 19 Oct (MPR).

Grasshopper Sparrow: The only report was 1 in Appanoose Co. on 14 Aug (RLC).

Le Conte's Sparrow: 2 were near Spirit L. on 26 Sep (THK). At Snake Creek M., 12 were seen on 26 Sep (JLF) and 2 on 30 Sep (DHe).

Sharp-tailed Sparrow: At Snake Creek M., 6 were seen on 26 Sep (JLF), 1 on 30 Sep (DHe), and 1 on 2 Oct (MPR-details).

Fox Sparrow: 2 were early at Mud L. in Palo Alto Co. on 25 Sep (LAS)[3rd earliest]. The last were on 3 Nov at Cardinal M. (DeC) and Sioux Center (JV).

Song Sparrow: A peak of 36 were at Cardinal M. on 12 Oct (DeC).

Lincoln's Sparrow: The first was at Cardinal M. on 15 Sep (DeC). The last were 4 in Appanoose Co. on 16 Oct (RLC).

Swamp Sparrow: Migration peaked from 6 to 16 Oct with 24-30 birds reported from Coralville Res. (DRP), Cardinal M. (DeC), and Appanoose Co. (RLC).

White-throated Sparrow: The first was at Grammer Grove on 15 Sep (MPR). Birds were still at feeders at the end of the period in Clive (JRC) and in Iowa City (JLF).

White-crowned Sparrow: The first was at Moorehead P. on 4 Oct (PE), and 1 was at a Clive feeder 5-8 Nov (JRC).

Harris' Sparrow: The first was in Clay Co. on 19 Sep (LAS). Another early bird sat on top of a spruce tree in Algona on 22 Sep (MCK). There were 8 at DeSoto N.W.R. on 18 Nov (BKP, LRP).

Dark-eyed Junco: There were two September sightings -- in Clay Co. on the 19th (LAS)[ties 3rd earliest] and at Union Slough N.W.R. on the 23rd (MCK). "Oregon" juncos were "quite common" in Sioux Co. (JV).

Lapland Longspur: 100-200 were in Marshall Co. on 2 Nov (MPR), and 150 were below the Red Rock Res. dam on 3 Nov (MPR).

Snow Bunting: The first were in Sioux Co. on 26 Nov (JV). The only other report was of 150 in Allamakee Co. on 28 Nov (DRP).

Bobolink: Flocks included 18 at Cardinal M. on 31 Aug (DeC) and 15 in Cass Co. on 12 Sep (MAP). The last was at Cardinal M. on 15 Sep (DeC).

Eastern Meadowlark: 6 were in Appanoose Co. on 17 Oct (RLC), and 1 was still singing near Fairfield on 20 Oct (DCP).

Rusty Blackbird: 2 were at Zirbel Sl. on 24 Sep (THK)[record earliest]. A flock of 1,000 was at Trumbull L. on 11 Nov (LAS).

Brewer's Blackbird: 2 were in Johnson Co. on 20 Nov (DRP-details).

Common Grackle: 1 lingered at Fairfield on 13 Nov (DCP).

Orchard Oriole: The only report was 1 in Warren Co. on 28 Aug (AMJ).

Purple Finch: The first were pairs at Grammer Grove on 4 Sep (MPR) and in Polk Co. on 5 Sep (JIS).

Red Crossbill: The only reports were of 8 at Hickory Grove P. in Story Co. on 20 Nov (HZ) and 4 in Polk City on 22 Nov (AMJ).

Common Redpoll: The only report was of 2 in Emmet Co. on 24 Nov (DHe).

Pine Siskin: 9 reports described 1-8 birds, with the first on 1 Oct at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP). They were, however, described as "plentiful" in Sioux Co. in Nov. (JV), and 30 were seen on 21 Nov in Warren Co. (JIS).

Evening Grosbeak: Singles were reported in Marshalltown on 9 Nov (Betty Savage fide MPR) and Cedar Rapids on 26 Nov (DLD).

CONTRIBUTORS

* = documentation only

Carol A. Alexander (CAA), Fairfield; Pam H. Allen (PHA), West Des Moines; Reid I. Allen (RIA), West Des Moines; Neil Bernstein (NB), Cedar Rapids; Dick Bierman (DBi), Cherokee; Gordon J. Brand (GJB), Newton; *Tanya E. Bray (TEB), Bellevue, NE; Marion M. Brewer (MMB), Cherokee; Dennis Carter (DeC), Decorah; Robert I. Cecil (RIC), Des Moines; Jane R. Clark (JRC), Clive; Michael D. Cox (MDC), Ames; Raymond L. Cummins (RLC), Centerville; David L. Dankert (DLD), Cedar Rapids; James J. Dinsmore (JJD), Ames; Chris Edwards (CE), North Liberty; Bruce Ehresman (BEh), Boone; *Dan Eiten (DE), Denison; Bery Engbreetsen (BEn), Des Moines; Peter Ernzen (PE), Ida Grove; Carolyn J. Fischer (CJF), Mason City; James L. Fuller (JLF), Iowa City; J. Donald Gillaspey (JDG), Lamoni; Rita Goranson (RGo), Mason City; Dennis Henrickson (DHe), Estherville; *Terry J. Hulsebus (TIH), Denison; *Maridel Jackson (MJ), Ankeny; Ann M. Johnson (AMJ), Norwalk; Thomas N. Johnson (TNJ), Mystic; Matthew C. Kenne (MCK), Algona; Thomas H. Kent (THK), Iowa City; Sharron R. Laub (SRL), Rippey; Babs K. Padelford (BKP), Bellevue, NE; Loren J. Padelford (LJP), Bellevue, NE; Marietta A. Petersen (MAP), Walnut; Peter C. Petersen (PCP), Davenport; D. Randall Pinkston (DRP), Iowa City; Diane C. Porter (DCP), Fairfield; Carl Priebe (CP), Sidney; Beth Proescholdt (BPr), Liscomb; Mark Proescholdt (MPR), Liscomb; *Tim Schantz (TS), Knoxville; Lee A. Schoenewe (LAS), Spencer; *W. Ross Silcock (WRS), Tabor; Jim Sinclair (JSi), Indianola; *Mike Stegman (MS), Garwin; John Van Dyk (JV), Sioux Center; and Hank Zaletel, (HZ), Colo.

COMMENT

The vast majority of reports arrived on the 2nd and 3rd of December, which was of great help to us at this busy time of year. We also thank Carl Bendorf for providing the weather summary.

Observers did a thorough job of documenting and photographing several unusual species that occurred in Iowa this fall. There were a few birds seen at very unusual dates that were not documented or not described in enough detail to include in the report. Birds seen at record early or late dates should be fully documented. One reason for this is to let the Field Reports editors know that the observer was aware of the unusual date. For example, when we checked on two species reported at very early dates, we found that there had been a transcription error for the month. Another reason for documentation is to indicate how well the bird was seen and the circumstances of its arrival at an usual date. Finally, many species are not easily

identified, so details of what was seen and heard are an important check on the validity of the record.

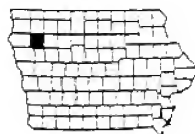
Most observers provide an optimum amount of data. Some people provide a short list of such pithy findings that we suspect that they left out some birds that others would report. A few provide long lists that include all common birds leaving the editors to pick out the important findings. This is a heavy burden when there is so much data to enter into the computer for sorting. We ignore sightings that do not provide specific locations, dates, and numbers. Early and late dates and high counts are useful, although observers should use some discretion if these are not unusual or if they were only birding in the middle of the expected migration interval.

211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246 and 6 Longview Knoll, NE, Iowa City, IA 52240

LEWIS'S WOODPECKER IN CHEROKEE COUNTY

MARION M. BREWER

On 14 October 1992, Vernie Bierman and I were cleaning out a few bluebird houses which were located on a dead end road 3 miles north of Washta on the west side of the Little Sioux River in Cherokee County. At 2 p.m., at the end of the road, I saw a flicker-sized woodpecker about 15 yards away in a burr oak tree. It had a mostly dark head, back, and wings, and a very noticeably pinkish belly. It had a light colored collar around its neck, a lightly streaked chest, dark bill, and a greenish cast to the dark back. It flew crow-like with slow wing beats from the oak to a tall wooden utility pole. There it perched with the top half of bird looking over the edge. With a Nikon scope, I could see a reddish color above its bill and on its cheek.



I consulted the National Geographic field guide and quickly identified the bird as a Lewis's Woodpecker, a species I had never seen before. I was not aware of its rarity in Iowa until I consulted Iowa Birds. There I found that it had been reported in the state only twice, from 28 November 1928 to 20 March 1929 in Sioux City (Bailey, *Bull. Iowa Ornith. Union* 7:3, 1929; Youngworth, *Proc. Iowa Acad Sci.* 38:277-285, 1931) and from 10 November 1935 to 10 March 1936 in Clear Lake (Davis, *Iowa Bird Life* 6:12, 28, 1936). Later that afternoon I reported this observation on the Iowa Birdline and my phone rang for a week.

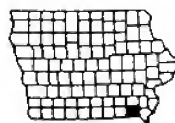
The next afternoon, I met Eugene Armstrong and several other birders who had been unable to locate the bird in the morning. Almost on cue, it showed up for all of them to see. The Lewis's Woodpecker stayed for five days from 14-18 October and then was not seen again. Over those days, it was my pleasure to meet many birders from other parts of Iowa. The woodpecker often perched on top of a utility pole and fed on an acorn. Perhaps the good crop of acorns in the fall of 1992 attracted the bird to this area.

1537-560th Street, Cherokee, IA 51012

NORTHERN PARULA NEST IN VAN BUREN COUNTY

D. RANDALL PINKSTON

The Northern Parula nests across southeastern Canada and the eastern United States with a conspicuous gap in Iowa and much of the Western Great Lakes region (Peterson 1980). It prefers bottomland forest and swampy habitats where its nest is typically placed in a tuft of Spanish moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*) in the South, or beard lichen (*Usnea* sp.) in northern forests. It may also nest in wooded areas where no hanging moss is available (Pough 1946).



In Iowa the Northern Parula is a rare summer resident in riparian habitats of southeastern and central Iowa (Dinsmore et al. 1984). Evidence of nesting has been inferred from a female and nest reported from Lacey-Keosauqua State Park in Van Buren County on 29 May 1979 (Koenig 1979), and two carrying nesting material at Wildcat Den S.P. in Muscatine Co. on 9 May 1986 (Myers 1986). Interestingly, Spanish moss does not occur in Iowa and, historically, the beard lichen is known primarily from the northeast and from Dickinson and Emmet counties in northwestern Iowa (Malone and Tiffany 1978).

On 15 May 1993, my wife Patricia and I discovered a Northern Parula nest at Lacey-Keosauqua State Park, Van Buren County, along the first stream crossing at the east entrance road. A male's characteristic song was heard near where a female was foraging. Soon the female disappeared into or onto the nest which was placed approximately 40 feet high in the outermost branches of a hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) tree.

We returned the next day with Jim and Joyce Durbin to study the nest in more detail. From ground level it appeared to be a woven basketlike structure of grasses, leaves, and bark shreds (Figure 1). It was attached along its length to a stout branch and secured on the other side and below to drooping twigs. Again, a male was singing near the nest but the female was not observed the second day.

My son Daniel and I returned to the nest on 23 May. We observed it in the rain for three hours between 10:40 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Again, a male was singing at intervals throughout the period but no Northern Parula activity was observed at the nest. On one occasion a female Brown-headed Cowbird landed briefly at the nest, peered inside, gave a rattle call, and flew away. Egg-laying by Northern Parulas occurs from 20 April to 30 May in Texas (Oberholser 1974). Perhaps the nest was occupied by an incubating or brooding female the whole time, although it might also have been abandoned. Unfortunately, I was not able to return to the nest again.

The Northern Parula is a common summer resident in Missouri where Breeding Bird Survey data indicate it has increased steadily over the past 25 years (Robbins and Easterla 1992). Summering Northern Parulas were recently found in Henderson County, Illinois (across the Mississippi River from Des Moines County, Iowa), north of the species' usual range in that state (Bohlen 1989). Our observations provide a second record of nest-building by the Northern Parula in Iowa, both from Lacey-Keosauqua State Park. Evidence of successful nesting in the state is still lacking but will no doubt be discovered someday in southeastern Iowa. My thanks to Jim Dinsmore and Tom Kent for recognizing the significance of this nest discovery at the time it was made.

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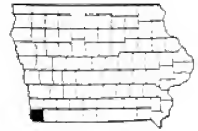
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526 Reno St., Iowa City, IA 52245

BLACK-NECKED STILT AT RIVERTON AREA

ANN JOHNSON AND PAM ALLEN

Iowa has long been a melting pot for species from other regions of North America. Iowa birders know that the southwestern corner of the state is the most likely place to find species that are more commonly found in Nebraska, Kansas, or other states further south. On 12 May 1992, we headed for southwestern Iowa in search of the Brown Pelican and Snowy Plover that had been found there earlier. Although the pelican eluded us, the plover was in sight in the Allen's scope when Johnson arrived at the Riverton Area in Fremont County. The water level was low, and the surrounding mudflats were alive with numerous shorebirds.



After studying the plover for a time, Johnson began panning the mudflats for other species. A large concentration of Hudsonian Godwits was present, but one large shorebird was immediately identifiable as a Black-necked Stilt. The bird was much taller than the other birds near it, and its black-and-white markings were distinctive. The black upper parts extended from the foreneck, down the nape, mantle, and wings. The underparts were white, as was a spot above the eye. A white "hook" was visible between the neck and the wing. The long, bright pink-to-red legs created a sharp contrast to the body. The black bill was long, straight, and needle-like.

Technological advances have not escaped the birding world. The Allen's cellular phone allowed for a quick call to Ross Silcock, who along with Tom Kent and Dick Tetrault, soon appeared on the scene. The bird was not seen again the next day.

This observation is the third accepted record of Black-necked Stilt in Iowa. Although the species may be easily observed as nearby as central Kansas in the Cheyenne Bottoms areas, it was not verified in Iowa and added to the state list until

1984. Twelve earlier reports of stilts in Iowa were judged to have insufficient information for acceptance (Dinsmore et al. 1984). The first accepted record for the state was a pair that was photographed at Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge in Kossuth County on 1-2 June 1984 (Kent and Silcock 1985). The second observation occurred nearly seven years later when a single bird was observed by many on 6-14 April 1991 in Woodbury County (Huser 1992). Perhaps with an increase in the level of Iowa birders' activity, sightings may soon become a nearly annual occurrence. It is certainly a bird Iowans should be looking for during shorebird migration.

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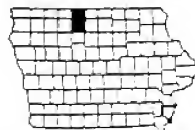
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GYRFALCON IN KOSSUTH COUNTY

BRAD BOLDUAN

On 27 March 1992, I was photographing waterfowl at the Iowa Lake Wildlife Management Area in northwestern Kossuth County. I was at the edge of the water in a pothole which contained hundreds of ducks and geese when almost all of the birds flushed. I then saw a large bird flying in the midst of a large flock of ducks about 100 yards away. It rapidly closed the gap between it and one of the ducks. The bird then appeared to grab the duck in midflight and flew out of sight behind a hill.



After about 30 minutes, I decided to look for this bird. As I came to the crest of a rise between two potholes, a large raptor flew from a Wood Duck box to a nearby willow. I walked to the willow where I thought the bird had landed. Just as I was giving up on relocating the bird, a large raptor flushed about 20 yards from me. Due to its size, my first impression was that the bird was a Great Horned Owl. The bird flew in a semicircle about 40 yards from me. During this time it banked away from me showing a definite falcon silhouette. The falcon then flew about 100 yards north before flying past me and landing near my original position to the south. As the falcon flew below eye level, I was able to see the top of the falcon. I had not yet been able to see any color on the bird so I decided to walk to the southwest and approach the bird with the sun at my back. I had walked about 100 yards when the falcon flew from its perch and made a complete circle around me. It broke from the circle and flew over a pond at an elevation of about 20 feet, flushing a duck from the pond's surface a short distance in front of it. The falcon made a shallow dive and knocked the duck into the water where it landed with a large splash. The falcon then flew along the edge of the pothole and flushed another duck which flew in front of and below the falcon. When the duck was about 10 yards above the water, the falcon made a shallow swoop, grabbed the duck with its talons, and flew north with the duck in its grasp. The falcon landed in a willow tree north of the pond.

I approached to within about 40 yards of the falcon with the sun at my back. Since I was on a hill, the falcon was just above my eye level. At this angle, I could still not make out any distinct facial markings. My view was partially obstructed by a small branch, and the falcon was looking directly at me. The breast appeared streaked, and the entire bird appeared dark. When it flew, I could see the dark wing linings which show in the picture I took at this time. The bird flew north into Minnesota.

The photographs I took of this bird allowed it to be identified later as a Gyrfalcon. Beside being dramatic, the falcon's behavior was an aid in identification. Its flight and perch sites were relatively low to the ground. I never saw the falcon fly higher than 100 feet (probably much less) and its highest perch was about 35 feet above the ground. It made its kills after shallow powered swoops. The plumage patterns were difficult to distinguish in the field but it appeared entirely dark in flight.

This is the first documented record of a Gyrfalcon in Iowa. There have been numerous other reports of this species in the state but none have been supported by photographs or good documentation of the bird. Gyrfalcons have been reported from all states adjacent to Iowa except Missouri so this record is long overdue.

117 Lake Park Blvd., Fairmont, MN 56031

I.O.U. BUSINESS

FALL BUSINESS MEETING

Ruthven, 25 September 1993, 3:30 to 4:50 p.m.

PRESIDING: ANN BARKER, PRESIDENT

ANN BARKER FOR HILDA SICKELS, SECRETARY

Barker thanked Jim Fuller and local hosts Lee and Nancy Schoenewe for their work in organizing the meeting. Minutes for the spring business meeting were read and approved as corrected (motion by Pam Allen, seconded by Rick Hollis).

Reports

Treasurer: Pam Allen distributed financial statements for the period ending 31 August 1993, including a statement of support, revenues and expenses, and membership information. Membership has reached a plateau of 660-670. Tom Kent suggested that institutional members should be listed as subscribers rather than as members.

Records: Tom Kent reported that the committee is continuing to review old records. Files have been reorganized. Rules have been revised so that anyone can request a re-review of any record.

Membership: Diane Porter has been appointed committee chair. Jim Sinclair will again mail membership information to feeder survey participants who have requested it.

Publications: The committee will meet after the business meeting.

Library-Historical: The committee has not met. Hank Zaletel has continued to send materials to the special collections at the Iowa State University Library.

Breeding Bird Atlas: No report.

Big Day: No report.

Education Booklet Promotion: Hank Zaletel reported that 392 copies of the booklet have been sold.

Review copies have been sent to the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union and the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology. Notices have been sent to each school district in Iowa.

Spring Count: Pete Petersen reported that the count took place 9 May with reports from only seven counties submitted. There is still some sentiment that the count date should be that of the national count. The committee was asked to report to the board of directors at its fall meeting and recommend a date for the 1994 count and to report to the membership at the spring meeting with suggestions for a permanent date arrangement. The committee will meet after the business meeting.

Field Trip: Ann Johnson reported good attendance and high interest. The final 1993 trip is scheduled for 20 November to the Red Rock area. Trips planned for 1994 include one on 9 April to Cone Marsh.

Code of Ethics: Barker reported that the committee is still being assembled; it currently includes Rick Hollis, chair, and Beth Brown. Hollis would like to publish a proposed code in the newsletter before a vote by the membership. A straw poll revealed that the membership favored a long form of the code rather than the short form.

Nominating: Barker has appointed a committee composed of Bob Cecil, chair, Diane Porter, and Francis Moore to prepare a slate of officer and board candidates for consideration for election at the spring meeting.

Birdline: Fuller reported that calls were down during the summer floods. Apparently the message about membership information has generated some new members.

Old business

Upcoming meetings: Plans are set for the spring 1994 meeting in Ames. A fact sheet prepared by Jim Dinsmore was reviewed.

Announcements

Members were notified that Cal Knight and Jim Walter have been ill recently.

BOOK REVIEW

Finches & Sparrows. An Identification Guide by Peter Clement, illustrated by Alan Harris and John Davis. Christopher Helm, London, 1993, 500 pp., hardbound \$49.50 This book is similar in format to earlier guides on seabirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, and swallows. Three short introductory chapters tell how to use the book and provide background on the groups covered. Most of the book is devoted to accounts of 290 species in three families (the Fringillidae including 3 species of Fringillinae and 125 species of Carduelinae, 128 species of Estrildidae, and 34 species of Passeridae.) The coverage varies slightly but generally includes identification, description, geographic variation, voice, status, habitat, behavior, distribution, movements, measurements, and references. Because of the book's emphasis on identification, the first two sections are the most detailed. The 73 color plates, with a range map and brief description of key characteristics on the facing page, are an important feature. A glossary, bibliography, and index complete the book.

Potential purchasers of this book should know that the author's definition of sparrows does not include the familiar sparrows we find in Iowa. Only 12 species found in Iowa are covered in this book. Most of the species occur in the Old World, and only 31 are New World species. The illustrations are very well done, usually showing a male, female, and juvenile (but five plumages for the American Goldfinch and nine for the Common Redpoll). Both artists have done an excellent job of capturing the subtle streaks and other features of many of these species. I especially liked Davis' plate of the crossbills. Overall, the plates and the brief descriptions on the facing page seem to provide enough information to identify the various species. Only a few of the color plates show a bird in flight but black-and-white illustrations in the text show key flight characteristics for some species.

A few final comments: The range maps are too small to provide much detail of a species' range. The range map of the House Finch doesn't show the completion of that species' march westward across Iowa and the Great Plains. Iowa readers will do a double take when they find both species of crossbills with unfamiliar "European" names (Common Crossbill, Two-barred Crossbill). These aside, this is a high-quality book that will be a welcome addition to many birder's libraries, especially those who visit the Old World.--J.J.D.

FIFTY YEARS AGO IN IOWA BIRD LIFE

The lead article in the March 1944 Iowa Bird Life was an account of several experiences with owls by Ernest Steffen of Cedar Rapids. The article was illustrated with a painting of an Eastern Screech-Owl and four line drawings of owls in typical poses, all by the author. A skilled artist, Steffen's drawings illustrated numerous articles in Iowa Bird Life over the years and also were used in a book on South Dakota birds that was published in 1978. Another article summarized the 1943 Christmas Bird Counts in Iowa. The 13 counts found a total of 62 species; a Black-billed Magpie at Sioux City was the most unusual bird. Des Moines had the top count with 41 species. Overall, only four species of waterfowl and a total of four Bald Eagles were seen on the counts. Times have changed. In the notes section, observers in Ames, Cedar Rapids, and Mount Vernon all reported seeing Red-breasted Nuthatches, indicating 1943-44 was an invasion year, much as we have had in 1993-94. The book review section included a review of "A Guide to Bird Watching" by Joseph J. Hickey who died last August at age 86. This little gem has been reprinted several times and still is a useful guide 51 years after it first appeared. The main criticism of the reviewer, Fred Pierce, was that, at \$3.50, the book was too expensive.--ed.

